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THE UNDISCOVERED SHORES.

BY EBEN E. REKFOR.

The roving winds blow landward
And bring the breath of blossoms
To us, from that strange country
We dream about so much.
The breath of sweetest blossoms
That bask in one long summer
Where sorrow never cometh,
And no one groweth old.

Sometimes, in dreaming moments,
I fancy that I see them
With sunshine all about them—
The undiscovered shores
I stretch my hands out, yearning
To touch the deathless flowers,
And drink of the clear fountains
So near, yet far away.

So near, that in those moments
The dropping of an eyelid
Brings them before my vision
To glad my weary eyes.
So far, I cannot find them
As sweetest things of earth are
Forever on beyond us,
And only seen in dreams.

Oh shores that haunt my fancies
In sleeping or in waking
Bright with the bloom of summer
For ever, ever more,
You fill me with strange longings
As, in the cold, white winter,
We dream of roses' fragrance
And long for summer days.

Oh, mystic, far-off country!
When weary with its troubles
The heart, by some strange magic,
Can bring your shores in sight.
And listening to your voices,
We rest, and so grow stronger
To bear life's crosses onward
Until the day is done.
Then, when the tide sets seaward,
Our souls will cast their moorings
And sail out to discover
The shores of endless peace.

Freelance, The Cavalier Corsair; OR, THE WAIF OF THE WAVE.

A Nautical Romance of the Early Years of the
Nineteenth Century.

BY COL. PRENTISS INGRAHAM,
AUTHOR OF "THE CRETAN ROVER," "MERLE,
THE MUTINEER," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

A GRAVE BETWEEN THEM.

LIKE a flood of silver light the moon's rays
streamed down from a cloudless sky, and
bathed land and sea in its halo of dreamy luster.
The winds had died away, and the waves
broke with muffled sound upon the pebbly beach,
while in the background the dark line of forest
echoed to the shrill notes of songsters—the
mock-birds of the South, trilling forth their
melody, as though in joyful admiration of the
calm beauty of the scene.

Along the curving shores of the Gulf, here
and there gleam from the magnolia forests, the
snowy walls of a plantation villa, surrounded
upon either side with spreading acres, tiled by
the dark hands of the slave, whose white cot-
tages are visible in the distance.

In front of these homesteads, the abodes of
wealthy and aristocratic Southernmen, lying at
anchor upon the waters of the Gulf, are visi-
ble yachts of various sizes and rig, but with
sails furled for the night, and no one visible
upon their decks, for the world seems to have
sunk to sleep under the calm influence of the
hour.

Along the shore, and in front of the villas,
winds a broad carriage-drive, and in the dis-
tance appears a horseman, slowly riding along,
the hoofs of his steed falling lightly upon the
dusty road.

At length he halts in front of a massive gate-
way leading into the handsome grounds of a
villa situated back from the road.

Peering through the foliage he beholds a light
in one of the windows, and from his lips break
the words:
"It is the signal! she will be there."

Quietly he enters the gate, closing it without
a sound behind him, and then leaving the drive
that approaches the house, he skirts the fence,
and rides toward a distant clump of trees,
through which patches of white glimmer in the
moonlight.

Nearer and nearer he approaches the clump
of trees, until his spurs to force his horse on,
for the animal seems to dread some danger
hiding in the unlighted covert, or, with the peculiar
instinct of dumb brutes, dreading to approach
the spot where the dead lay at rest.

Presently through the foliage a white fence
was visible, surrounding the marble monuments
erected over those who had sunk to sleep for-
ever, but, apparently with no superstitious
feeling regarding a cemetery, the horseman
urged his horse forward, and springing to the
ground threw the bridle-rein over a post.

As he did so the animal started with a loud
snort, but a word from his master calmed him.
What had caused the sudden fright of the
steed was certainly sufficient to cause human
nature to become momentarily unsteady, for a
form, clad in white, advanced from the shadow
of a marble tomb directly toward the horseman,
who nimbly sprang over the low fence and said
earnestly:

"Lucille, my darling, you are a brave little
girl to meet me here," and he drew the slender
form toward him, and, bending over, imprinted
a kiss upon the upturned face.

"It is not a cheerful place, Launcelot, for a
lovers' tryst, yet I do not fear my dead ances-
tors, for I have never harmed them; but then I
had an idea that our other rendezvous was
known, and hence wrote you to come here."
"And I would have come anywhere to meet
you, Lucille; but has anything arisen of late to
arouse your suspicions?"

"Yes, my father seems to watch me, and
yesterday forbade me to go, after nightfall, to
the arbor on the cliff; but tell me, Launcelot,
when will our meetings be no longer secret?"



"Launcelot Grenville, I curse you!"

"To-morrow, Lucille, I intend to seek your
father and tell him of my love for you; he, as I
before told you, knows who I am, though you
do not, other than what I have told you regard-
ing myself."

"And I have kept my promise and never
made an inquiry regarding Mr. Launcelot
Vernier, the handsome young gentleman who
saved my life, and then stole my heart," said
the maiden, playfully.

"You will find, Lucille, that I have deceived
you in one thing only, but I did so with no dis-
honorable motives, I pledge you."

"Circumstances over which you and I had no
control caused me to beg you to keep our meet-
ings a secret for the present, and a fear of losing
you perhaps made me err in this; but to-mor-
row you shall know all, for, having been North
at school, since you were a very little girl, the
rumors of the neighborhood are unknown to
you."

"I hate gossip, Launcelot, and frequently
have to hush up old Mammy Chloe, who, like
many other old negroes, likes to chat about the
affairs of others; but to-morrow you will see
papa!"

"Yes, and, Lucille, you will still love me,
come what may?"

"Never can I love any one else, Launcelot;
but you are sad; do you dread trouble?" and
Lucille laid her hand gently upon the man's
shoulder, while the moonlight, streaming down
upon them, made a picture worthy the artist's
brush.

The maiden was scarcely more than seven-
teen, with a Madonna-like face of wondrous
beauty, and a tall, willowy form, perfectly
molded.

She was dressed in white, and her embroi-
dered skirt trailed behind her, and her hair
was a mass of wavy curls, and her eyes were
shining, and her cheeks were flushed, and her
shoulders, and half hid the masses of golden hair
and haughty head.

The man was six feet in height, as straight as
an arrow, full-chested, with broad shoulders,
and a form that was not only elegant, but de-
noted great strength and activity.

He was dressed in a riding-suit, top-boots, and
a gray slouch hat, the broad brim being turned
up, permitting his face to be visible.

And it was a face that few could look upon
and not admire—a face of beauty in every out-
line, blended with nobleness and calm dignity,
a dignity that amounted almost to sternness,
when the features were in repose.

The complexion was dark; the hair and long,
drooping moustache, black, and the eyes restless
and full of fire.

Replying to the maiden's question, the man
said, slowly:

"It seems almost too much happiness, Lu-
cille, when I think that I may win you as my
wife, and bitter obstacles are before us; but we
will hope for the best. Now you must not re-

main longer out in the night air, and to-morrow
our fate will be sealed."

"Devil incarnate! this night shall your fate
be sealed."

The words rung out loud and stern on the
night air, and a dark form bounded from the
shadow of a tree and confronted the lovers, an
upraised arm and knife in hand.

But, quick as was his spring, and taken by
surprise as he was, the man thrust Lucille to one
side, and a pistol gleamed in his hand, aimed di-
rectly at the heart of the assailant.

"Drop that knife, Colonel Darrington, or I
will kill you!"

"For Heaven's sake, do not fire, Launcelot;
it is my father!" and the trembling maiden
sprang between the two men.

Instantly her lover lowered his pistol, while
he said, sadly:

"Forgive me, Lucille; for the moment I for-
got that he was your father, and only looked
upon him as the lifetime foe of my race."

"Ay, Launcelot Grenville, and from this mo-
ment your foe unto death."

"Now, in the presence of my daughter, there
must be no scene; but to-morrow, sir, you shall
hear from me, and the sun shall set upon one
Darrington or Grenville less."

"Oh, Launcelot, are you a Grenville?" cried
Lucille, half shrinking away.

"Yes, Lucille; I told you that there were bitter
barriers between our love for each other—I am
Launcelot Vernier Grenville," said the
young man calmly.

"And you love this man, Lucille?" cried the
father, turning toward his daughter.

"I do, father, with all my heart and soul."

"God bless you, Lucille; and, sir, I love her
daughter—hold, and hear me—I love her with
the honor of a true man, and I would ask you
and her to let the dead past bury its dead, and
the names of Darrington and Grenville become
united."

"Never, sir, never!"

"Stay, Colonel Darrington, and remember
that I am the one that is offering the right
hand of fellowship to the man who killed my
father."

The voice of Launcelot Grenville was deep
and stern, but his manner was earnest, and
there was no tremor in the hand he held forth
to Ferd Darrington.

"By heaven, sir, you will dare me to strike
you even here. Never will I consent that your
blood and mine shall mingle in the veins of a
human being. Only in hatred and the bitter
struggle for life and death shall your blood
mingle with mine."

"So be it, Ferd Darrington. You have
spoken, and the grave now yawns between us—
a grave I was willing to step across with ex-
tended hand."

"And I hurl back that proffered hand with
hatred and contempt!"

"Father, this gentleman saved my life, for he
it was who saved me the day I was kidnapped
by the coast pirates; he it was who attacked
them single-handed, killed two of their num-
ber and rescued me."

"Great God! is this true, Lucille?" and the
strong man staggered back as though dizzy
with overwhelming emotion.

"It is true, father; I told you that a horse-
man passing, and doubtless a traveler, came
to my aid, and I told you the truth, for only
days after, when out riding, did I meet him,
and from that time on we met often, until
I learned to love him with all the devotion
of my heart."

"And, Colonel Darrington, fearing that Lu-
cille would turn from me in horror, knowing
me as Lance Grenville, I gave her part of my
name, that of Launcelot Vernier, and it was
my intention to-morrow to seek you and ask
that the past might be forgotten."

"And again I say—never!"

"Father, I love him, and he loves me; he has
as much, if not more, as I remember the history
of the fearful vendetta between our families, to
forgive than you and I, so listen to our appeal,
father, and let the past be buried forever."

The maiden's voice was plaintive and appeal-
ing, and approaching her father she rested a
hand upon either shoulder, and looked beseech-
ingly into his white, stern face.

But the devil of his nature had complete as-
cendency, and in hoarse, cutting tones, he
said:

"I swear it! Your life, or mine, Lance Gren-
ville!"

"Come, Lucille."

The maiden quickly sprang from him to the
side of her lover and throwing her arms around
his neck, she cried passionately:

"Oh, Launcelot! Launcelot! This is the end
of my happy dream of love! Farewell! forever,
forever!"

Drawing her quickly toward him he pressed a
kiss upon her cold lips, and turning away
sprang into his saddle, and dashed swiftly from
the scene, urging his splendid horse, by a
mighty leap, over the picket fence that sur-
rounded the handsome grounds of the Darring-
ton villa, and flying down the road at a mad
pace, that proved how his noble heart was torn
with grief and despair.

CHAPTER II.
THE DUEL-VENDETTA.

COLONEL FERD DARRINGTON, a stern, haughty
man of forty, and the last male survivor of his
race, sat on the broad piazza of his elegant
house, the morning after the scene at the bury-
ing-ground of his family.

His brow was dark and clouded, his lips firm
set, and his eyes gazing out upon the waters of
the Gulf with that fixed stare, which proves the
thoughts are far away.

Presently the rumble of wheels awoke him
from his reverie, and glancing up he beheld
what, in his time, he had never seen before—the
well-known carriage of the Grenvilles, coming
up to the door of his home.

Instantly he was upon his feet, his face livid,
when from the vehicle sprang a young man,
clad in the attire of an officer in the United
States Navy.

Both men knew each other well by sight, but
never before had a word passed between
them.

Ascending the steps, the young officer said,
coldly, though bowing with politeness:

"Colonel Darrington, I believe?"

"Yes, sir, and I address Lieutenant Arthur
Grenville."

"You do, sir, and I have called to ask, Colo-
nel Darrington, if you intended it as a personal
insult to me when you named, in your affair
with my brother, Mr. Rosal Abercrombie as
your second—a person whom I certainly do not
look upon as a gentleman, and will hold no com-
munication with."

"You can take it as you choose, Lieutenant
Grenville, and, after my meeting with your
brother, I am perfectly willing to hold myself
answerable to you," was the quiet reply of Ferd
Darrington.

"It is my desire, sir, that your meeting with
me be prior to that with my brother, and, as I
decline to act with the second you have named,
we can arrange the time and place for ourselves
personally."

"Ah, I see your drift, sir. You wish, if pos-
sible, by killing me, to prevent a meeting be-
tween myself and Mr. Lance Grenville," said
Colonel Darrington, with a sneer.

"You guess aright, sir. Knowing the imme-
diate cause of quarrel between you and my
brother, I fear that he will not attempt your
life, and that you, in your merciless nature,
should spare him, I have no idea, so I desire to
place the meeting on a more equal footing, by
being the first to face you."

"I will willingly oblige you, Lieutenant, after
I have met your brother, but peremptorily de-
cline doing so before, and as you object to Mr.
Abercrombie, and I wish to place no obstacle
in the way of my hostile meeting with Mr.
Lance Grenville, I will refer you to Mr. Van Loo
as my second."

Arthur Grenville bowed, and, with a look of
disappointment upon his face, entered his car-
riage and drove away.

As the vehicle drew up for the footman to
open the gate, a slender form suddenly sprang
to the window, and Arthur Grenville beheld
one of the most beautiful faces he had ever
looked upon.

It was now white, the eyes were red with
weeping, and the traces of deep sorrow rested
upon every feature, and still the face was ex-
quisitely lovely.

"Ah, sir, beg Launcelot Grenville not to kill my father!"

The words and voice were pleading, and Arthur Grenville seemed moved with pity, while he answered sadly:

"Alas, Miss Darrington, I fear that it will be the other way; but I will do all in my power, for your sake and my brother's, to prevent a fatal termination."

"God bless you," and stepping back Lucille allowed the carriage to go on, while she retraced her way to the mansion, feeling a hedge between herself and the eye of her father, who still paced the piazza.

Having objected to the young man named as Colonel Darrington's first second, on account of his wild and dissolute character, Arthur Grenville could find no fault with Paul Van Loo, a wealthy young planter, and a friend of both himself and brother, and he accordingly sought him out and a meeting was arranged for sunrise the following morning, at a lonely grove upon a point that jutted out into the Gulf.

Before the sun arose on the following day, the Grenville carriage, with its negro coachman and footman in livery, rolled along rapidly to the field, where, ten years before, the father of Lance and Arthur had fallen by the hand of Ferd Darrington, and where, for three generations the Darringtons and Grenvilles had faced each other in the deadly vendetta, and always with fatality to one name or the other.

It was a bitter feud, that had begun half a century before, when a Grenville had been the successful rival of a Darrington for the hand of a beauty and heiress, and had eventually ended in bloodshed, the mantle of hate descending like an heirloom from father to son, until at last two of the name had met and loved each other.

So impatient was Ferd Darrington to meet the man who had dared to love his second already upon the field, they having come there upon horseback, accompanied by a negro servant who bore the deadly weapons to be used in the affray.

Bowing coldly to each other as they met, the two seconds then walked one side, while Colonel Darrington impatiently paced to and fro, an evil glint in his eye, and Lance Grenville leaned against a tree, his arms folded, his face pale, but emotionless, and his eyes gazing afar off upon the gulf, as though striving to look into the great beyond and behold the fate in store for him.

How he would have shrunk in horror from that future, had he read in those blue waters the destiny that awaited him.

"Colonel Darrington, Lieutenant Grenville informs me that his brother was the one who rescued your daughter from the coast pirates, some months ago, and that fact?"

"I am, sir, and I am surprised that Mr. Grenville should endeavor to shun this meeting by hedging himself behind a favor rendered to me and mine," was the haughty retort.

"You mistake, sir," Mr. Grenville is represented by his brother, who, in the hope of ending this affair without a fatal termination, told me of the circumstance which none of us in the neighborhood before suspected, and, believing that I know the man to whom you owed to Mr. Lance Grenville the life, and perhaps more, of your daughter, this present difficulty might be averted, I spoke as I did."

"I thank you, Van Loo, for your good intentions, but nothing that Mr. Grenville has ever done, or could do, will mitigate the slightest degree my hatred for himself and name, and you will oblige me by immediately making arrangements for the duel."

Paul Van Loo seemed surprised, and drawing a sword from its scabbard tested its temper, while Arthur Grenville walked toward his brother, who had not seemed to hear the effort made at a reconciliation between himself and his enemy.

A few moments more, and throwing aside their coats the two men stood facing each other, swords in hand, for, as the challenged party, Lance Grenville had chosen those weapons, and his motive for doing so was soon evident, for a superb master in fence, he had determined to disarm his antagonist and give him his life.

A few paces, and the blade of Colonel Darrington was twisted from his hand; but, without following up his advantage, Lance Grenville lowered the point of his weapon, and said, calmly:

"For the sake of Lucille, sir, I will give you your life."

"My life I will not accept at your hands, sir, and as you have proven my master with the sword, the pistol will place us upon a more equal footing," and Ferd Darrington was white with rage, and seeing that he was defeated, Paul Van Loo had no alternative but to take from their velvet case the long dueling pistols.

With a bow, Lance Grenville signified his acceptance of the weapons, and a second meeting, and soon the two splendid-looking men again faced each other at ten paces apart.

"Here, Lance, and for God's sake, do not let that man kill you," and Arthur Grenville placed the loaded pistol in his brother's hand.

Lance Grenville made no reply, but a grim smile crossed his face, and he stood like a statue awaiting the word.

It soon came, given by Paul Van Loo:

"Gentlemen, are you ready?"

Both men bowed.

"Fire! One!"

With the word one, the pistol of Ferd Darrington exploded, and a dull thud was heard, while Lance Grenville started slightly, and moved one step backward; but, instantly, he recovered himself, and suddenly raising his pistol fired above his head at a red-bird—in hue a fit songster for that scene—that sat singing in a tree above the heads of the two men.

Instantly the red-bird fell from his perch, his head severed by the bullet from Lance Grenville's pistol—a splendid specimen of marksmanship.

Paul Van Loo sprang to the side of Colonel Darrington, crying:

"Colonel, you saw his shot! He has twice saved your life, and I beg now that this affair end here."

The white lips of Ferd Darrington parted, and the words were hissed out:

"Demand another fire! Load those pistols again, Van Loo!"

"It rests with Mr. Grenville, whether he will meet you again," said Paul Van Loo, evidently hurt at the determined hate of his principal.

"My brother has twice risked his life, and twice spared that of Colonel Darrington. I will not consent to another fire," said Lieutenant Grenville hotly.

"Then I shall hold him responsible whenever and wherever I meet him, after leaving this field," came the quick retort.

Arthur, if it has to come to chance encounter to settle this affair, let it end here. I will exchange shots again with Colonel Darrington," said Lance, and his lips slightly quivered as though with some inward emotion that was choking him.

Again the two men faced each other, and once more the word was given to fire, and both pistols were discharged together.

As the smoke drifted away, Colonel Darrington was discovered lying his full length upon the ground, while Lance Grenville stood with folded arms, gazing in astonishment upon him, and with an expression of intense sorrow in his face.

"I have killed him, Arth, and Lucille will now curse me."

There was a depth of feeling in the words that proved how terribly the strong man suffered, and Arthur Grenville made no reply.

"Yes, he is dead. But, Grenville, you acted most nobly; are you not hurt?" and Paul Van Loo arose from the side of the dead man and approached Lance Grenville.

"At the first fire his bullet struck here—see! This turned its course from my heart, and it gave me a mere flesh wound," and he took from his breast-pocket a miniature set in a heavy gold case.

But the glass was shattered to atoms, the gold indented, and the face that had been painted

thereon, was deeply marred by the bullet, and yet both Paul Van Loo and Arthur Grenville saw that it was the miniature likeness of Lucille Darrington that had saved the life of Lance Grenville!

Take the carriage, Paul, to bear his body home, and we will follow your horses," said Lance Grenville sadly, and mounting the very animal ridden there by Colonel Darrington, the unhappy man rode away, followed by his brother, who felt deeply for him in his sorrow, and yet secretly that the affair had terminated as it had.

In the meantime Paul Van Loo, aided by the servants, had placed the body in the carriage, which at once rolled rapidly away toward the Darrington villa, where the longing, staring eyes of Lucille, who had been waiting with a cry of joy she sprung to her feet, for she recognized the vehicle, and believed that those who had gone forth with deadly intent had returned as friends.

Eagerly she watched the carriage, saw it halt before the broad stairs, the door open, and then, as her eyes fell on the dark, dead face of her father, she uttered a shriek of anguish and fell heavily upon the floor, where she lay like one whose life-cords had snapped in twain.

CHAPTER III.

A WOMAN'S CURSE.

TOWARD the close of day, several years after the death of Colonel Darrington by the hand of Launcelot Grenville, a rakish-looking schooner was standing in the Gulf, and a single-stemmed small cove, sheltered by a heavily-wooded point of land of what is now the coast of the State of Mississippi.

That the schooner was an armed craft was evident at a glance, for her hull and rig, for vessels of her long, narrow hull, and single-stem masts that raked far aft, with an almost piratical air, were not found in the merchant service.

As she drew nearer the land, a person would have discerned upon her decks four guns to a broadside, and a crew of sixty men were idly grouped about, looking at the pretty villa plantations that dotted the coast.

Upon the quarter-deck were several officers, who, like the men, had a foreign air, and whose dark faces, medium-sized statures and bright eyes denoted that they were of Mexican origin.

The officers wore uniforms, elaborately trimmed with gold lace, and the sailors were attired in blue shirts, white duck pants, and skull-caps encircled by a white band, which was embroidered in green silk a serpent.

One person upon the quarter-deck stood near the helmsman, directing him how to steer, and that this man commanded the destinies of the schooner was evident at a glance.

Possessing a tall, commanding form, attired in a costly uniform, and with a strikingly handsome face, in which a settled sadness was blended with sternness, he was a man both to fear and admire, and always to respect.

Scarcely his eyes ran along the shores, and the wind being fresh, he gave an order to the helmsman to head toward a certain point, where the white walls of a villa gleamed through a dense mass of foliage.

As the schooner neared the shore the sun went down behind the western horizon, and half a score of small pleasure yachts that were sailing upon the waters, filled with gay parties, headed for their respective anchorages, and darkness settled upon the sea, just as the armed vessel swept up into the wind and dropped anchor within a quarter of a mile from the land.

Instantly the sails were lowered and furled, and the schooner rode quietly upon the waves, as silent as though the three-score men upon her decks had gone to rest.

Thus the hour passed away, and then a reddish glare was visible on the eastern horizon, and into the clear skies sailed the moon, convoked by fleets of stars upon her way.

As the silvery beams of light marked a path across the rippling waters, a boat was lowered over the schooner's side, and a single personage, who seized the oars and pulled with a strong, quick stroke toward the shore.

As the moonlight fell upon his face it displayed the officer who had guided the schooner to her anchorage.

Landing under the shelter of the cliff he dragged the boat half out of the water, by a slight effort of his great strength, and quickly ascended to the hill above.

Here he paused, and a shudder ran through his frame, as he stood with his arms gazing down upon an open, grass-covered spot in front of him.

"Here am I again upon the scene that has proven so fatal to my name," he muttered, in a low, deep voice.

"A spot where I buried every hope for the future, and a love that almost drives me to madness when I recall what I lost; but, God knows I was driven to it, and that a bitter curse has dogged my footsteps!"

For a moment he remained in silence, and his face grew cold and stern, as he seemed brooding over the past; then again he spoke in the same deep tones:

"What devilish impulse has brought me here I cannot tell; but, certain it is an irresistible desire has made me come again to the scenes where I have suffered so much."

"A short mile from here, and but a year ago, I stood upon a gallows, condemned to die, a Cain-accursed man; but, through the love and courage of my faithful sister, escaped, and my own hand struck down the beastly murderer, who had sworn my life away as my brother's murderer—that dearly-loved brother who now lives doubtless happy in the love of the woman who so charged me as gulf of the crime of Cain."

And he glanced down the coast, where lights glimmered from the windows of a lordly house, once his own.

"Ah me; how bitterly cruel Fate has dogged my steps, and now led me back to this spot—and why?"

"God knows why; but I am the football of destiny and must not hesitate now but go where-soever my guardian angel, be she good or evil, would lead me—and she leads me yonder."

He turned abruptly and glanced in the other direction from the villa, where the lights were visible, and there his eyes rested upon another house half a mile distant—the place toward which the schooner had headed when a league out from the land.

With a hasty step he strode away from the spot that seemed to recall such painful memories, and crossing the highway approached a massive gateway that seemed crumbling rapidly to decay by total neglect.

Springing over the fence he stood hesitating in the grounds, which were overgrown with rank weeds and underbrush, while back a few hundred paces arose dark and gloomy the walls of a large mansion, now almost hidden by the dense growth of trees surrounding it.

"There she lived, and—perhaps died; but whether she is alive or dead I will soon know, for yonder burying-ground will tell the story."

"Was said she committed suicide after she knew her father fell by my hand, and then that story was contradicted and none knew where she had gone."

"She cannot live in yonder old mansion, which Time is rapidly making a ruin of; but I shall see—Ha!"

Quickly he bounded into the shadow of the massive gateway as the roll of wheels came to his ears, and an instant later a carriage appeared on the highway, while its occupants were discussing the presence of the rakish-looking schooner lying at anchor so near inland, and which the moonlight plainly revealed, floating as silent as a coffin upon the waters.

As he looked like a pirate vessel, and I will not have an instant's sleep until it sails away," said a merry voice in the vehicle, while another answered in girlish tones:

"Oh, I would so like it to be a buccaneer craft, commanded by a dashing, handsome young chief."

Then the carriage rolled on out of hearing of the man crouching in the shadow, and the moonlight showed a grim look upon his face as he arose to his full height again.

"Ah, no, my fair friends, yonder craft does not blot the skull and crossbones at her peak; though Heaven knows I have had cause enough to make a very devil out of me; but I must not stand here," and he again pushed on, carefully, though fearlessly approaching the house.

Look behind you, to the broad steps, which trembled beneath his feet, he walked noiselessly round the piazza to the rear of the mansion and there suddenly halted, as a dim light shone from the window.

With step as noiseless and stealthy as that of a panther he crept up and glanced in at the open window.

He beheld a room that had once been handsomely furnished, but the furniture was now worn and faded, yet still had an air of neatness upon all.

A table, upon which stood a lamp, sat an old negress in a calico dress and bandana handkerchief, engaged in knitting, while she hummed in a low voice a camp-meeting air, keeping slow time with her needles.

Upon a chair near the broad fireplace, in which glowed a few coals, was an old negress, his head frosted with the snows of three-score and ten years.

He held a pipe between his lips and was gazing into the fire with that listless, thoughtless look habitual to old age, which gives the idea that those nearing the grave are ever looking back into the bygone with memories only said.

From the room were two doors, one evidently leading out upon a back piazza and the other into what appeared a bedroom.

"Here I can learn what I would know about her; but I will first seek yonder, for I would not be seen here by any one, if I can avoid it."

So saying the man retraced his way around the piazza, and descending the steps went toward the grounds in the direction of a distant grove of trees.

Crossing an open lawn or field he skulked rapidly along as the moonlight fell full upon him, and hastily darted into the shadow of the trees.

Was the same grove that had been the fatal trying-place of Launcelot Grenville and Lucille Darrington years before; but here, as upon the mansion, rested an air of neglect and decay, for the little fence that inclosed the burying-ground was half-broken down, and the graves were overgrown with weeds.

Lucille Darrington, who was always her slave. He would do anything to win a smile from her, and thought no task too difficult to please her. What then more natural when they grew older than that they should be married? Daniel and his wife advised it. John loved her—she could remember that now, and she was but sixteen.

She wondered, vaguely, if she could have ever been that little Lucille, who watched for the coming of John from his labors—rough, unpolished John.

And yet she had longings even then of a higher life. The common surroundings annoyed her, and their uncouth actions and coarser language rasped her own ideas of the fitness of things. John, poor John, was always kind—wearisomely so, but tender of his wife, his Lucille.

One day in winter he had bade her good-by for a few days, he said. He must go fifty miles to attend to some business, but father and mother would care for her while he was gone. Day followed day, and snows piled their flakey whiteness high over all. John's father watched anxiously for his boy who came not at the time appointed. Two weeks passed, and they were told that John was missing. He could not be found; he had never reached the end of his journey, and he was dead. How he died they knew not, but search proved unavailing.

They pitied the poor young wife; so sudden! they said. As for her, she felt an irresistible longing to get away. Now that John was dead she felt that she could never live there always, with the toil and hardships of her life. She wanted to come East, of which she had heard rumors as from a fairy tale. Unknown to Daniel and his wife she made arrangements to leave.

When she reached St. Louis, she wondered, suddenly, how she was to live. But, she would find work; some one, surely, would employ her. While waiting in the depot she espied a man who looked kind, she thought. She asked him if he knew where she "could get work." Mr. Strathmore, the patrician face took on an amused expression, as if he was an Intelligence Office he told her afterward.

But on looking more attentively, he stared with undisguised surprise. Here was a type of beauty in this wildflower he had searched for vainly. She told him not her real story, but said she came a long distance—that the past held no pleasant memories, and she wanted to forget it.

She married Ralph Strathmore, who took her abroad where teachers and travel added polish and elegance to her uncultivated mind. Her gratitude to him grew to love, and of the deepest intensity. And the thought suddenly came to her—what if John had not died after all! No one saw his death; might it not be possible—but no! she put the idea away, shudderingly. She was happy in Ralph's love; the past had been so dreary it must not be raised again.

That she had done wrong she knew. She never told her husband, who kindly said, if there was anything unpleasant in her history not to relate it; he loved her and believed her perfect in every way.

And the face of the fisherman she saw that afternoon was John Simpson, her husband! No, she would not call him that. He was here. What is to prevent him from searching for her or telling Ralph?

"It must not be, it shall not be!" moaned the wretched woman, walking excitedly up and down. "I can not bear to see Ralph's face grow stern and white with the knowledge that I have deceived him."

The next day she did not drive out; she scarcely looked from the window for fear his face would meet her. But still she thought it might be barely possible he did not know her. That he would pursue his humble occupation without daring to thrust himself into the presence of her and fashion.

She walked to the mirror and surveyed herself. Would he know her?

She saw there a tall figure, graceful and undulating. A glory of golden hair, straight eyebrows above brown, glowing eyes—eyes that might hold a startled look in their somber depths and a pathos in their brown shadows. A dress of satin, rose-tinted, with delicate lace draped over it and palpitating with filmy whiteness.

You look like Venus emerging from the ocean," said her husband admiringly. "Your dress has the rosy hue of the sea shell, the lace drifts over it like the foam of the waters, and your pearls are from the empire of Neptune himself. How peerlessly beautiful you are!"

Would she be if he knew all? she thought! "Have I improved since you knew me? Do I appear the same person?" she inquired anxiously.

"No," he responded, smiling a little at the contrast; then you were the ghostly, very, very magnificent self. I can scarcely realize you are the same woman."

Ralph Strathmore was wealthy, refined and proud. His marrying Lucille was done in a moment of the moment, but one act which he never regretted. As she had no friends, so he solicited, she had no poor, common relations, who, claiming his wife as kin, might have subjected him to unpleasant associations. He had given her the name of Lucille—Lizzie not being suitable for her, he said. He had no curiosity to inquire into her past life, thinking it would be only a record of poverty and hardship, which would jar upon his finer sensibilities. Now, as his wife, she was beautiful, accomplished and refined. What more could he ask?

That night, after a wait, Mrs. Strathmore and her partner stepped to one of the long windows opening on the porch. Looking in outside was the face of all faces she dreaded to see. Gazing in fixedly, with an expression of joy shining over his rough features, and staring in a quiet, dazed way, as if undecided whether to come nearer or not.

NIGHT.

BY WILLIAM TENNYSON HEATON.

Girl with misty memories sublime,
Look on her crowned with stars!
She was a queen in her time,
And sat by Nilus' bars.
Of all the kings and queens of earth,
She trails her glory yet;
She dwells to the planets birth,
And has nothing to regret.

Lucille.

BY LAIL GAY.

A PHAETON, velvet-lined, drawn by cream-colored ponies, rolled along the beach. In it sat Mrs. Ralph Strathmore, a young, graceful woman, with inscrutable brown eyes, that looked as if they held some secret that hung like the sword of Damocles over her.

She had driven along carelessly as if indifferent where she went, and had taken a road little used, which the long roll of the ocean almost claimed in its briny caress. Further on some fine old apartment house, gleaming with a boat, which she did not notice until the ponies shied at the strange obstruction.

One of the men suddenly sprang at the bits and held them with a grasp of iron. He stared at Mrs. Strathmore, first with a curiosity that became a stare, and then, wavering in unbelief, and settled into recognition.

As for her she seemed powerless to move, but gazed in dumb horror with dilated eyes at him. She gathered the reins at last and turned her pony back toward the beach, and reached the hotel, gave the lines to her groom, and walked quickly to her room. Her husband rose smilingly to meet her.

"What ails you, Lucille? You look as if you had seen a ghost. Did your ponies run away, or was it the happiness of my eyes?"

"My ponies behaved admirably. I feel tired; that is all."

"I shall not let you go alone again. I shall only feel safe when you are with me."

"And I only feel safe when you are with me. Ralph, you must not let me go, will you? Never, even if you hear anything that would make you hate me!" she asked, eagerly.

"I will always love you, pet," he said, ear-

nestly, as he stooped and kissed her. "What made you imagine such an absurdity?"

"I cannot tell you. If ever I lose your love I have nothing else to live for. I wish you would take me away from here, Ralph. I am sick of it all. The hollow gaiety and society-life that has no depth. Let us go to some quiet country place where we can have rest."

"Rest," she repeated to herself—"would she ever again know rest in this world?"

"Leave Newport, when you were so anxious to come? Where you reign queen of society and leave it for some rural retreat? I am too proud of you to be selfish enough to hide your precious self in seclusion."

"Are you proud of me, Ralph, of your wife? Do you never have a regret that you married me, penniless and friendless?"

"Never a regret, never. But, Lucille, you certainly must be ill. You have lost entirely that elegant repose of manner I so admire in you. You tremble and are pallid."

"It is nothing—a slight indisposition, that is all," and she passed her hand wearily across her eyes as if to shut out the face of the man by the shore.

"No, I will not go down this evening but remain in my room," she said, in answer to her husband's inquiry whether she was ready for supper.

When he left she sunk down in a chair with a stifled moan. It had come at last! The haunting fear that had followed her for years was now confirmed. The ghostly doubt would not be buried. She had piled miles of distance and years of absence upon its grave, and here it was in the face of her joy.

She thought of her childhood. Her life seemed mapped out before her. And, try as she would to forget to-night, a drawing fascination kept the one idea constantly before her.

When she was a child, her father and mother she remembered but dimly; they had died when she was a tender child. She would have been homeless had not Daniel Simpson and his wife, kindly neighbors, given her a home and place in their hearts. They were rough, but friendly people, and she remembered, with a little pang of abasement, had made her their idol. The best their cabin afforded, or any small luxury they could possess, was given to pretty Lucille, as they called her.

Daniel had one son, John, who was always her slave. He would do anything to win a smile from her, and thought no task too difficult to please her. What then more natural when they grew older than that they should be married? Daniel and his wife advised it. John loved her—she could remember that now, and she was but sixteen.

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A CITIZEN of Fleming, Ky., fired at a rat, struck a keg of powder, blew his house to pieces, and had to jump into the river to keep from burning up. The rat remains unhurt.

Australia than be kicked by Tom Dunwood, as I must let him do if I stay on board of the brig. I'm sorry to leave the captain; for he is the best friend I ever had on earth. Tell him I

"Yes, sir; I have told you everything I can think of. I can't recollect anything back of the time when I was in the circus, swinging on the slack rope, turning somersets, and standing on my head on the head of the great American rider. They gave me enough to eat, which was

native who sleeps on an average twenty hours out of the twenty-four, and cannot get along with less. Her motto, says the *Albany Journal*, ought to be handsome is what handsome doze.

wind he always told by the peculiar location of the stitch in his side. He paid but little attention to reports from signal stations, and told me to say nothing about it, which I promised not to do.

BEAT TIME.

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BEAT TIME.

BY HARRIET MABEL SPALDING.

A Great Mistake.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

an old man's love and his name, and his
 name. Gladys! My darling, is it?"
 For she had bewitched him, and—all his magnificent
 fortune, his princely home, the grand old
 man, the unassailable position as his wife
 and mistress of Sunnylands, were lying at her
 feet, to be cast or rejected.
 It was a wonderful streak of fortune, and
 Gladys had told herself so, over and over, in
 the twenty-four hours since Mr. Sardis had
 made his offer of marriage to her.
 And she had been right, for only—hand-
 some Clyde had been so strange concerning
 the truth than she had believed.
 Gladys had dared whisper to herself when
 he said that for such as she love should be lord
 of all.
 And she never could, by any possibility, care
 for Clyde's grandfather, a wife, all his courtly
 manliness and his riches and his position, be-
 cause—she loved the grandson, the magnificent
 young fellow who was confidently expected to
 make love to and marry Isidore Duncan.
 And she had been right, for a great wrenching pain at
 her heart that was a strange commingling of
 anger and disappointment and jealousy and
 misery, as she imagined Clyde and Miss Duncan
 off riding together in the sweet May sunsetting.
 And she had been right, for she had seen
 Clyde's Sardis gently interrupted her wandering
 thoughts.
 "Well, Gladys! Remember I have been pa-
 tient for twenty-four hours, and now I want to
 know how it is to be. Child—can you let me
 know you for my blessing, my treasure? Come
 to me and love me with all your fresh
 young love! Because, unless you can, I would
 rather you would frankly tell me what
 will be a sore distress to me."
 To be mistress of Sunnylands. To own the
 very horses and carriage with which Isidore
 Duncan had been wont to ride. To rise higher
 than the haughty woman who paid her
 dollars a month for services rendered. To have
 diamonds and signed blank checks—should she
 if only she could crush down that fierce long-
 ing for Clyde Sardis; if only—
 And Clyde had a very ancient family cry.
 "Mr. Sardis said; 'you are aware that Clyde
 and Isidore will be married in a few months,
 and unless you come to be my little wife, I shall
 be very lonely, all to myself.'"
 It was Isidore's cry, for suddenly swiftly-pal-
 ing face and for just one anguishful little min-
 ute his breath seemed leaving her lungs, her
 heart seemed as if grasped in a cruel iron hand,
 and then—it was over, and she smiled in an-
 swer.
 "And it is because I cannot comprehend why you
 should want me, Mr. Sardis. If you really
 do—"
 She had no need to finish her speech, for
 Mr. Sardis drew her to him in a sudden, glad
 embrace.
 "My own little love! You never, never shall
 regret this. If ever a woman experienced what
 it was to be an old man's darling, it shall be you,
 my Gladys!"
 And, after she had hoped to her room, she
 walked up and down, and down, and up, in
 white, drawn face that would have horrified
 both of the two men, with her small, fair hands
 tightly clenched, trying to beat down the agony
 of jealous longing for Clyde Sardis, with his
 eyes, and his face, and his voice, and his
 voice, and masterly way that had completely
 conquered her. Once that evening she went up
 to Mr. Sardis as he sat at an open window—in
 a leading little way that was absolutely ir-
 resistible.
 "Please don't mention our—our engagement,
 will you? It will be unpleasant for me—until
 I get a little used to it. Wait until I tell you,
 will you, please?"
 He caressed the fingers that lay so lightly and
 sweetly on his arm.
 "If you wish it so, Gladys. It is fortunate
 that you spoke so early, for I had fully intend-
 ed to explain it all to Mrs. Sardis and Isidore
 Clyde, when they have finished their croquet."
 It was Isidore's husky way of speaking, now.
 And, despite that prompt, gentlemanly suc-
 quence to her whim, Gladys also comprehended
 he would have preferred it otherwise.
 "When they finished their croquet," Mr. Sar-
 dis had said; and when they finished it, Mrs.
 Sardis and Isidore had been to the garden
 on the brilliantly-lighted parlor where the old
 gentleman sat—and Clyde went straight to the
 dusky corner in the adjoining room—the music-
 room and Mrs. Sardis's morning parlor—where
 he had been wont to sit, and to smoke, and to
 look out into the starry darkness.
 "I will not intrude, Miss Saxehurst," he said,
 lightly and half-inquiringly, as he went up to
 her, so near that he could see her ravishingly
 beautiful face that was even more glorified by
 the peculiar shadow light—
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 "Because," he said in a quick, passionate
 whisper that thrilled every nerve in her frame,
 because I will come to you, anyhow. I have
 been dying of impatience to finish what I would
 have said this afternoon.
 Gladys! You must love me! you must love
 me! Will you? Darling, do you?"
 Beyond the hopelessness of it, the cruelty of it,
 the feeling that he was engaged to Isidore Duncan,
 the speechless ecstasy of it all surged like a
 wave of fire through her.
 Just one little moment of weakness, or rather
 of desperate reckless longing and heart-aching
 to his handsome pleader who had no more
 right to speak than she had to listen—Gladys
 made him stoop and kiss the quivering crimson
 lips, over and over, and hold her close to his
 breast. Only for one little, little second; and
 then, she broke away from him with an impatient,
 despairing little cry.
 "What can you come of this, even if
 we love so love each other! Clyde! Clyde Sardis,
 was there ever such sarcasm of fate before?
 We love each other, and you are to marry
 Isidore Duncan, while I am engaged to—your
 grandfather!"
 She fairly flung the last words at him, and
 he, looked as if she was speaking random words.
 "What are you saying, my darling? I am to
 marry Miss Duncan? Perhaps people think so,
 but certainly it is not so, as the lady herself can
 testify. But I must understand what you mean
 by saying you are engaged to marry my
 grandfather, Gladys."
 An anguishful little cry came from her lips,
 and she shrunk back into the chair again.
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THE LOAN IS APPROVED

Divorced but Not Divided;
OR,
HIS GUIDING STAR.

BY "A PARSON'S DAUGHTER."

AUTHOR OF "BETH FOSS," "THE PRETTY PURITAN," ETC.

PTER X

A SELF-WILLED WOMAN.
 "For if she will, she will, you may depend on't:

THE morning after Mrs. Jerrell's party found Griffis Gilruth dissatisfied with the world in general, and most of all with himself; which was entirely a new experience for that gentle-

you" with a shade of anxiety not characteristic of her.

Grith looked indifferently that he was far from feeling, as she answered:

"Is not Atterbury your lawyer? It would not do to interfere with another man's client."

"Yes, Mr. Atterbury has managed my business since the death of my father and Mr. St. Martyn. But I have no objection to your doing as you do not care to have him take this matter in hand. To tell the truth, Griffs," laughing, "I am afraid he will think it a foolhardy affair altogether and consider it his duty to attempt to advise."

"And you imagine I will do your will, blindly?"

"I am willing to try you," she retorted, gayly.

"And what is this rash undertaking, in which you need a lawyer's assistance?"

"Do you promise to devote yourself to it?"

"I promise to devote myself to your interests, always, Elinor."

"But when Mrs. St. Martyn had narrated the events of the previous evening, he exclaimed, impetuously:

"And you expect me to encourage you to commit yourself further to this preposterous affair? I never heard of such madness! I would not have supposed you capable of doing any such thing. I must breathe a sigh of relief, and must let the matter drop immediately, Elinor, and I will take steps to see that your name does not go abroad in connection with it!"

Mrs. St. Martyn trifled with her flowers while he spoke, only a deepening glow in her cheeks betraying her emotion.

"I am giving this to your opinion of my acts, but whether you were willing to make a professional engagement with me. It was quite easy to say *no*. There are dozens of lawyers and detectives who are perfectly willing to take the affair in charge, preferably, I am sure, to me, and I am glad to intimate that you cared for me, and I supposed you would interest yourself to prosecute the matter thoroughly and privately. I will determine upon some one else, immediately."

"You are certainly right," she said, and stood leaning there and looking down at her. For a moment his eyes blazed and his lips were compressed, ominously. Yet there was something in the beauty's very anger that attracted him. He was not angry, and never commanded her, yet he longed to conquer.

"Do you mean," he said, presently, very calmly, "that you have fully made up your mind to continue your connection with this affair in direct opposition to any one's or every one's advice?"

"I mean that I have given my promise to a young woman; and I will not break it, no matter how unpleasant or even terrible are the consequences I am forced to face in order to keep it!"

"You are certainly not going to undertake any personal unpleasantness?" he said, seriously, going and bending over her chair.

"Whatever I anticipate, I offered you the chance to learn the worst and to do for me your worst. I am sorry to be disappointed," she answered, carelessly, yet looking up at him with a smile.

He changed his position, suddenly, took her hands in his and bent above her face with eyes passionate and full of compelling witchery.

"O Queen Elinor, command me—if you love me."

"You are unfair, Griffs. I will not buy your services *so*."

"Nonsense, my friend! If you are determined to prosecute this matter, let the person to assist you. But, seriously, Mrs. St. Martyn, do you not think it rash to commit yourself to the unraveling of this mystery?"

"I think, and know, and admit, that it was rash to engage in such a strange affair," she answered, smiling again, "but I am helping to set a hundred times beyond what you can, Griffs. But I fully believe that it was a decree of fate which I was controlled; and I shall go on with what I have undertaken. I cannot make any other arrangement, and I am helping to fight a wrong done to an innocent individual. So all that we need discuss now is how to soonest sift this affair to the bottom. I have ordered my carriage and am going to Mrs. Lane's immediately."

"Elinor, I have a strong compulsion to resign my office, and I am prepared to do so."

"I will," assented Griffs, commanding himself so Mrs. St. Martyn's purpose without further protest, or a dream of the future he was thus to offer for himself.

"Thank you; I must ask you to excuse me, now, as I have a carriage which I shall not keep you waiting over ten minutes."

As she spoke a card was brought her upon which was penciled, underneath the name, a message, asking her for an immediate interview.

"Mr. Octavius Trefethen" she exclaimed, dropping the card upon the table. "I shall have to see him! It must be a matter of importance which impels him to pay a call—something which I cannot neglect any longer, perhaps. I do not think that I forgive her for allowing me to get them to me in time for the party!" he concluded, hastening to her visitor and not dreaming that she left Grith to unpleasant meditations aroused by the name she had read.

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"Whose carriage is this?"

"Mrs. St. Martyn's," answered Myra, gravely.

"Ah! And she has gone inside?" indicating the house.

"Yes, sir; she and Mr. Gilruth."

"Gilruth! Judge Gilruth?"

"No; don't know; Mrs. St. Martyn calls him Griffs."

An unpleasant smile flickered across the man's lips. Then he asked, insinuatingly:

"And what is your name, little girl?"

"Myra Taylor, sir."

The questioner stared, visibly; and gazed so intently at Myra's face that the child shrunk back, timidly.

"Myra Taylor! Then you are not Mrs. St. Martyn's little girl?" he resumed, persuasively.

"How comes she to take you riding?"

"My mother and I live with Mrs. St. Martyn," said Myra, wishing to get away.

"What does 'mamma' do?"

"She is Mrs. St. Martyn's maid."

"Oh!"

Apparently satisfied with his investigations the questioner turned toward the house and at that moment a young woman came out of the basement door and spoke a few hurried words to him. It was scarcely a minute before they disappeared again, and he, too, had walked on.

In the meantime Elinor and Griffs were in the room where they lay the dead stranger. According to Mrs. St. Martyn's command the body had already been arrayed in a delicate white shroud and placed in a plain rosewood coffin; and now that the funeral arrangements had been made, and were disturbed by excitement and anguish, had settled into repose, Christabel Letronne was seen to be a beautiful countenance, and one that bore the unmistakable traces of those ravages which often add more force to the passion of the eyes than any beauty of color or contour. Her hair profuse hair waved back from a marble-white brow, and her lashes were singularly long and silken. The mouth, too, with its waxen lips, spoke even yet of its once curving loveliness.

To Griffs the face of the dead woman was but briefly interesting, and only in a professional way; but for Mrs. St. Martyn it held an inexhaustible long and earnest gaze. She scanned its every feature with a keen, exact, and penetrating eye of the bright hair with tender grace over the white forehead, and lingered at the side of the coffin figure, thoughtful and sad, while Griffs questioned and cross-questioned Mrs. Lane.

"I have had occasion to read papers," she told him, "concerning her lodger was soon learned. Mrs. Letronne was from New Orleans. She was adydike and paid in advance. She went out a great deal, and had a daily paper brought her. One day when she was going out she perceived that her Lane had a safe. The landlady said that she had no safe, but a strong chest that she kept locked in a closet. Mrs. Letronne then requested that she change put in there, and said that the chest contained some state court papers. The parcel was square and thick, tied with ribbon, and sealed with wax stamped with the ring that Mrs. Letronne wore. Mrs. Lane knew that the package was safe the day previous to the boarder's death. She had no occasion to get some money from her chest and saw it there; but she could not say at what time after that the closet and chest had been opened. Mrs. Letronne had been more or less a subject of speculation in the neighborhood, and she had been on the boards; but she had made no acquaintances with her. Communications concerning herself or her business; and Mrs. Lane and her eldest daughter, Dora, had been the only persons who knew of the package and its contents."

Mrs. Lane's statement was entirely corroborative of her mother's. She affirmed that neither of them had any idea that the package contained anything but papers, and that she had continued its existence to no one, and had no theories. The package, however, had been sold, somehow, been made the victim of adventures. Miss Dora was a rather stylish girl of self-possessed; answering the questions put by Griffs with an even voice and almost invariable calmness, without betraying his will to sign of unusual embarrassment or interest.

"Elinor, can you take me directly to a detective agency? I shall put the matter into the best hands possible, and there is no time to be lost," answered Griffs, as he and Mrs. St. Martyn turned for their departure. His professional enthusiasm thoroughly aroused.

"Certainly; give your order to James," answered Mrs. St. Martyn, entering the carriage.

"Well, Myra, have you been lonely?"

"No, dear. I was a little frightened once."

"Why, dear?"

"A man stopped and spoke to me and asked me about the carriage, and you, and mamma, and me."

"There was James that he did not stop it! I must speak to him to keep better watch over you, and not let you be interviewed against your wishes," said Mrs. St. Martyn, pleasantly.

Then, turning to Mr. Gilruth, "Well, Griffs, have you been busy?"

"That at present this seems a mysterious case; but I have my doubts as to whether we shall not discover that landlady at the bottom of the mystery."

"No, Griffs. She is certainly honest. It is the daughter who knew of the package she told, if I do not like that girl."

"Is that a woman's intuition, purely?" questioned Gilruth, teasingly.

"Yes, a woman's intuition, purely."

"The daughter who knew of the package shall feel constrained to keep a look-out upon Miss Dora Lane. Now I must soon bid you good-morning, will attend to everything concerning this affair, personally, and nothing shall be left unattended to. I will help to get it out of its present muddle; dismiss it as early as possible, and let Elinor. You need rest. You have been, and are, more worried than you care to acknowledge. Try to forget it. I will see you this evening at the opera, if not before."

"Thank you, Griffs," said Mrs. St. Martyn, leaning her head against the satin upholstery of her carriage, and drawing her hand wearily across her eyes, when Griffs was gone. "If I only could! But I shall never be able to put that that head of mine at rest of any sight until I have fulfilled that promise I gave you. I shall find Jules Letronne, to do the wrong the had done him. What wrong? What had he suffered at her hands? What had he—this Jules Letronne—forgive her? What was this Christabel Letronne? Where was she? What was he? What was Jules Letronne—that was what he was called? Where was he? Where are the papers, the jewels, the jewels? Proofs of what? I could not go into eternity without undoing a terrible wrong once more. I could not go into eternity and searched, for the person I sinned against. Ask him to forgive—forgive me."

Every word that Mrs. Letronne had uttered was engraven as distinctly upon Elinor's brain as the words of the haunting dead face, and she could not be lightly forgotten. She crowded into her mind, and echoed in the air about her, until she found herself in the same exhausted, nervous mood that had assailed her for a time the previous evening. But the little Myra's presence was a relief. She took her up and showed her to a shop to another, to show her pretty flowers and toys and pictures, until she found forgetfulness and pleasure in the little one's delight.

It was a quiet, lunch-time when Mrs. St. Martyn reached home with her happy carriage, and dismissing Myra with a kiss, hurriedly dressed for that meal. At the table she found Mrs. Allison—an elderly lady and distant relative who had acted as companion to the beautiful young widow ever since the death of Mr. St. Martyn.

"Ah! Mrs. Allison, you are so much better! I am glad to see you down, again," Elinor said, kindly, stopping to shake hands with the mild-mannered old lady, who took genuine interest

in Mrs. St. Martyn, and all Mrs. St. Martyn's doings, and all Mrs. St. Martyn's friends, but was exceedingly sparing of words. Perhaps, it was that she stood a trifle in awe of the proud, brilliant society queen; certainly there was no great intimacy between the two, and the elder lady might not have appreciated how much unexpressed affection Elinor cherished for her.

"I am going to increase my family," Mrs. Allison said, Elinor, brightly, when she had poured a cup of fragrant tea for her companion.

The person addressed looked as startled, and colored as vividly, as if Mrs. St. Martyn had announced some matrimonial scheme in her behalf.

"My dear," she said in a tone partly exclamatory, partly questioning, that she often used when surprised.

"Yes, actually," went on Elinor, lightly, recounting Sydney's story and Mr. Trefethen's plans concerning her.

"I am afraid it will be a source of trouble to you," remarked Mrs. Allison with strange precision. "I do not think this raising young persons above their station is to be approved."

"Now, I, on the contrary, but if there is any unpleasant responsibility in this case it will fall on Mr. Trefethen, and not on me. Really, I cannot see how the young lady can be a source of trouble to me, aside from superintending her manners and toilettes."

"Well, I hope she will not be, dear. I hope not."

"Mrs. St. Martyn! Mrs. St. Martyn!"

The door was thrown open, and Myra ran in, pale and trembling.

"Mamma is sick! won't you come?"

Elinor hastened up-stairs with the child.

"Where is mamma?" she asked.

"In her room."

"And what made her sick?"

"I don't know," I was telling her about my ride, and the man who spoke to me, and she fell over."

Mrs. St. Martyn found the dark-robed figure of her maid lying senseless upon the floor. But a spray of cologne and application of salts speedily restored her to consciousness.

"Myra! Myra! Where is she?" she asked in seeming fright, as she opened her eyes.

"Here," said her mistress, soothingly, pushing the child into the mother's arms.

Taylor clasped the little one close to her heart, and kissed her, again and again.

"What is the matter, Taylor?" questioned Mrs. St. Martyn, recalling the young woman fully to herself.

"Only a passing faintness, ma'am. Did Myra call you?"

"It was nothing," she said, hurriedly.

"Certainly you look ill. I shall not want you before evening—the dress can go; I will wear something else—and you must lie down for a few hours," said Mrs. St. Martyn, generously but impatiently. "I will send Myra to Mrs. Allison awhile."

"Oh, no! no! Myra will be still. Let her stay with me!"

Mrs. St. Martyn looked surprised.

"You are nervous," she said, gravely.

"What has happened?"

"Nothing, ma'am," said Taylor, motioning Myra to go, and striving to appear calm.

Elinor led the little girl out of the room, while the miserable mother buried her face in her pillows, weeping bitterly.

"Why did I not tell her the truth? Perhaps she would have pitied rather than blamed me. There is nothing for me to do now but go away."

CHAPTER XII.

FORTUNE—AND ITS CONDITIONS.

Thus her blind sister, fickle fortune, reigns, And undiscerning scatters crowns and chains.

—POPE.

"GUARDY! GUARDY!"

An impetuous rap, then the swift flinging open of the door by the man within, and the almost breathless girl was caught in his strong arms, and her excited cry stifled against his broad shoulder.

"Where in the name of Heaven have you been, child?" he asked, after a minute, holding her from him and regarding her great dilated eyes and hot color, while his own face lost something of its pallor. "I only found a few minutes ago that you had been away all night; and I think I have grown a year older since, Helene, you met with no harm?"

"You shall judge, Guardy, dear," she said, brightly, drawing him to his arm-chair, the one luxury his room contained. And kneeling with girlish grace before him, she narrated minutely her mishap of the previous afternoon and advent into the Trefethen mansion.

"And you are sure you were not badly hurt? That you are quite well enough to come away? I had the doctor's permission to come. But, Guardy, I am to go back!"

"Back? Back where, Helene?"

"To Mr. Trefethen! Don't look so puzzled, Guardy, and so grave, while I am so happy! You will not bid me reject this good fortune, surely?"

Her companion smiled, and drew his hand caressingly across the girl's flushed, beautiful cheeks.

"Dear child, I have no authority to interfere with your life in any way," he answered, gravely. "And I certainly would not for an instant counsel you against the acceptance of any real good. A thousand times, Helene, I have wished that it was in my power to make existence more bright and beautiful for you, and he looked down with tender eyes into the girl's fair face. "But you have not told me what you mean by your 'good fortune.'"

"Mr. Trefethen has offered to take me as his ward, and care for me as he would for his own daughter, for a year, as a birthday present! There! what do you think of that?"

Her companion regarded her in amazement; and, for a minute, in silence. He loved the girl so well that it hurt him to see her so happy, high spirits, and so full of life and vision; and yet he could not but conjecture that the acceptance of such a strange offer would result in more bitter misery to her than any she had yet known. He understood her ardent nature, her passionate longings for a home and life above her station, and he felt that for her to spend one year in idleness and luxury, only to be thrust back into sternest poverty and utter friendlessness, would be like thrusting her from Paradise into hell!

"Guardy, you are not glad?" she said, wistfully. "You are not glad! Tell me why?"

She leaned her pretty dimpled chin upon her hand and watched him, with heart that beat too sweetly for her to quite conceal her anxiety and excitement.

"Little girl, what will you do when that year is up? Could you come back here, contentedly?"

"Mr. Trefethen said I was not to worry about that, Guardy. And he wishes to see you, this evening, immediately after his dinner-hour. He said that by that time he should arrange plans concerning my future that he would confide in."

"And you are to live in his home?"

"Really, I don't know, he is so very odd. But I think not. I wished to be allowed some duties, but he only laughed and said I need not think he intended to prison so bright a bird in that cage."

"I have heard of this Mr. Trefethen—that he is enormously rich, and quite eccentric; so perhaps this is not a marvelous whim of his, though it does seem so to me," said the gentleman, speculatively. "Can you explain it, Helene?"

"Not fully; but I think he imagined that he looked like some one he knew," answered the girl, ingeniously. "He said I had her name, and that it was a wicked name, and I must change it. Sydney Trefethen he called me—and said it suited me well. Oh, he is very funny! So gallant—like a young man ought to be—one minute, and so quick and cross the next! But you will go and see him?"

"Certainly, Helene. At what hour?"

"Between seven and eight. And now I must run away—I have much to do—so much! Some one must collect my furniture to dispose of, and my things to pack—and all to-day, for Mr. Trefethen is to send for me in the morning."

"Then you are really going away from this poor little place where you have worked and been at home so long? Do you care at all, little girl?"

There was a touch of sadness in the speaker's voice that sent the tears in a hot gush to Helene's sunny blue eyes.

"Care? Of course I care—to leave you! How can I not care? You have been! It makes me sick to think how little I knew until you taught me. Oh, Guardy! Guardy! I shall love you just as much, and best of all, wherever I am, and all my life!" and she laid her wet face upon his kindly-clasping hands.

And yet, for all the girl's passionate outburst of grief she knew only when they were quite separated all that this man was to her.

"That is very kind of you to say," smiling tenderly; "but time brings many changes. I only pray that you will find a true friend, though all others fail you. I am glad that a bright future is opening to you, for the time has come when I, too, must desert this place where I have hoped and toiled."

"I have been fearing that ever since you commenced getting rich and famous."

"How delighted I should be, if those flattering words were true, Helene! But I do hope the foundations of competency and lasting success are laid."

"I know they are!" she said, gayly. "Why, Mr. Trefethen recognized your name the moment I mentioned it. I assure you it was quite an open sesame for me to his faith! And now, Guardy, mind! you must make him promise, tonight, to me repay him in some way or what he proposes to do for me! Don't forget that!" looking back through the half-closed door with an earnest face.

And the man she left alone in his meagerly-furnished lodging, smilingly thought that the lonely old millionaire must be indeed very fond if he could not be repaid for all he might do for Helene's welfare by an occasional grateful glance from those brave, laughter-filled eyes. Then he wondered whether it was possible that Mr. Trefethen had discovered the girl's pretty face, and a clew to a percentage at present unsuspected, and which gave her some legal or moral claim upon him. Could her good fortune be thus accounted for, or had the fickle goddess of the horn of plenty chosen the friendless orphan as a favorite upon whom to lavish, strangely bright gifts, in mere whimsicalness? And thus the man fell to reviewing his own life—his dreary, despondent, sorrowful life, with its score of wasted years, that had led him no success until now that he looked upon his maid's rapidly-advancing prime, and even upon the girl's smiling face, cloud of promised happiness. Was he ever to conquer the malignity with which Clotho seemed determined to spin the thread of his life and win from her at last a golden girdle?

"Bah!" he said, disdainfully, rousing himself from his dreamings. "Is this the way to win the goal for which I strive and run! I have no minutes to waste, in idleness. Faster, faster, every day, speeds the time in which a fortune and a name must be gained!"

And he set himself resolutely at work, while the beautiful wail for whose sake he had been wont to daily rob himself of some of the precious hours he would otherwise have devoted to wrestling with his mad ambition, his Herculean purposes, had reached golden fortune just through the magic of her face.

But that night, for her sake, he sent in his card, Mr. Lucien Gillette, to Helene's new guardian, and was soon talking of her with Mr. Trefethen.

"She is pretty! Lovely! She pleases me!" said the old Frenchman, in a low, confidential tone, as he spoke of his interest in Helene. "But we will call her Sydney, now, if you please, Monsieur Gillette. She looks upon you as her guardian, I believe?"

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for her sake, I must ask how she can repay you for your favor?"

"By being a success!" snapped Mr. Trefethen. "She must not disappoint me! She must be a success!"

So Mr. Gillette took his departure—marveling how strangely destiny was weaving the wool of many lives through the hands of this queer old man who had gathered up the threads and offered fortune upon such strange conditions to the founding; and questioning:

"Will she be a success?"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 488.)

Iron Wrist,

The Swordmaster of Copenhagen.

A TALE OF COURT AND CAMP.

BY COL. THOMAS HOYER MONSTERY,
CHAMPION-AT-ARMS OF NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE FIRST STAGE.

It was the same post-house at which the Dane had been overtaken the evening before that he now knocked, and he took care to make the summons loud enough.

The same stupid postmaster came to the door, but as soon as he saw the gleaming uniform of the swordmaster, he began to make obeisance. "Mighty general, imperial highness, the horses are all ready. How many does your lordship require?"

"How many have you got?" demanded Olaf, for an idea had come into his head.

"Two complete sets, general—six horses."

"Out with them all—on the emperor's service," cried Olaf, and away went the postmaster as if he had been running a race.

Out came the horses, all ready harnessed for a trot or a gallop, and the postmaster looked round for the vehicle.

"Take the harness off, Nicolai, and change our saddles," commanded the Dane; and Nicolai, a stout, fat Cossack, trained to implicit obedience, followed the order in silence.

The postmaster staid in silence, but did not dare say a word, for Olaf stood close to him with a heavy whip in his hand.

No sooner were the saddles shifted than the swordmaster mounted his fresh horse and asked: "How many more horses, and where are they?"

"Only four, your excellency, and they are out in the fields."

Then drive these on, Nicolai. We shall want the cowboys, and the lanterns were swinging away in the wildest fashion.

Olaf looked at it a moment and then far ahead. He saw another set of lanterns, up in the air, a few miles further on, and, like the others, these lights were swinging about.

Then it flashed on his mind in a moment that he was being signalled about.

He contrasted the treatment he had received at the post-house with what the emperor's orders led him to expect, and his acute mind at once jumped to the right conclusion.

"They will not overtake us in a hurry this time," he thought. "We have left the horses, and by the time we have swept a few post-houses, we shall be out of danger."

He knew that loose horses will follow a herd for miles after they have been unsaddled for lack of ability to carry a rider, and that by having reached golden fortune just through the magic of her face.

But that night, for her sake, he sent in his card, Mr. Lucien Gillette, to Helene's new guardian, and was soon talking of her with Mr. Trefethen.

"She is pretty! Lovely! She pleases me!" said the old Frenchman, in a low, confidential tone, as he spoke of his interest in Helene. "But we will call her Sydney, now, if you please, Monsieur Gillette. She looks upon you as her guardian, I believe?"

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It seemed that they were doomed to a repetition of former delays. But Olaf had not been in the czar's service six hours without learning a few things, and he soon showed his knowledge.

"Who's there, this time of night?" asked a surly voice, inside. "Go away, in God's name, honest people."

Olaf had fired a second pistol through the door, and now he shouted, savagely:

"Open, in the czar's name, fool of a postmaster, or I'll burn your house over your head."

The bullet made a hole through the door, and they heard a startled cry from within, but the postmaster did not give way yet. They heard him shuffle up-stairs, howling all the way as if he was in pain, and Olaf realized that the Russian depended on the thickness of his door to defend him from a forcible entry.

"Come, we must give our friend a lesson," he said, to Nicolai.

The Cossack grinned, for he liked nothing better, and the two prowled round the house, till they came to the railed inclosure in the rear, used for stable horses.

"Here are the horses, excellency," observed the Cossack.

True enough, there were about a dozen horses, lean, scraggy brutes, in the corral.

"Why not take them and go, colonel?"

"Why not? Nicolai, we'll do so; but first I must chastise this impudent fellow. He must learn he cannot insult a Danish gentleman without paying for it. Take out a rail."

Nothing loth, the Cossack obeyed, and they went round to the front door, when a few vigorous prods sent the door flying from its fastenings, and revealed the station-master in his shirt at the head of the stairs, trembling with fear.

Olaf of Copenhagen dropped the rail, seized his whip, and began to threaten the station-master, who made no resistance when he saw the rich uniform of his assailant, but merely looked in a dismal manner.

"There, you rascal," cried the Dane, putting all his strength into a final cut. "You'll try to saddle the emperor's cowboys as soon as business, will you? Tell me quick, how many horses have you?"

"None, excellency, none," cried the Russian, in a tone of pitiful entreaty. "Indeed, I have not a horse fit for you."

"Then, if you have no horse in the stable?"

"They are all lame, general, sick, blind. Not one is fit to go out. All are at pasture."

"Well, I'll try them, anyway," and the swordmaster was as good as his word; for he rode off at a gallop, a few minutes later, driving all of the new lot of horses before him and leaving behind him only the exhausted horses from Paskoff.

As he galloped away, he noticed, not fifty yards from the post-house, another of those old-fashioned cowboys, and the lanterns were swinging away in the wildest fashion.

Olaf looked at it a moment and then far ahead. He saw another set of lanterns, up in the air, a few miles further on, and, like the others, these lights were swinging about.

Then it flashed on

MARRIED TOO YOUNG.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

My wife she was a beautiful thing,
And it need not be told
That when I wed I wed for love—
She married me for gold.
I'd past the vanities of youth
And settled down serene,
For I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

I only had been wed three times
The happiest marriage did I think
For I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.
Our ages seemed so suitable,
And at a happy mean,
For I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

My head might lack a hair or two
Perhaps, of being bald,
A tooth or two, I'm sure, saved me
From being toothless called.
My head was surely well with age,
My love was saccharine,
For I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

It was a fashionable match,
As everybody said,
She need not think that other girls
Would turn her husband's head;
And this assuring fact I know
By her was plainly seen,
For I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

That she would never grow old to me
She ought have surely known,
Also because I'm somewhat lame
From her I'd never have down.
Her people all were proud of me,
And well they should have been,
For I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

But ah, my wife was young and vain
While I was old and wise—
More than a father to her
In all the name implies.
"Grandfather, then, you are," said she,
With proud and haughty mien—
Though I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

She got to calling me "old man,"
Which I thought very rude;
To wear a cap and dress in gray,
Indeed, she never would.
She wanted to be vain and gay,
And dress like a May-queen,
Though I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

She had a very foolish head,
And I could plainly see,
Though somewhat blind, that she did not
Her old make of me.
She ran off with another man!
Was ever such shame seen?
And he is only about three!
And she is seventeen.

I know my heart would break to-day
Were it not old and tough;
Why she a young man should prefer
To me is strange enough.
The fault is she was far too young
To suit me; so I mean
To wed again at nineteen-five
A wife of, say—nineteen!

The Condor-Killers;

WILD ADVENTURES AT THE EQUATOR.

BY T. C. HARBAUGH,
AUTHOR OF "SNOW-SHOE TOM," ETC.

VI.

THE STRANGE TRAP IS SPRUNG—JACK'S FIRST
CONDOR.

HAVING divested the cow's carcass of the skin, Elgardo cut out some great hunks of flesh which he covered with his cloak and then, assisted by the boy Nicholas, who was still a loss to conjecture how he was going to catch a condor, he rolled the body to a cliff near at hand and dropped it into a valley far below. This valley was covered with a growth of prickly bushes into whose depths the condor would not venture after the faintest morsel, and the Peruvian boy, smiling at the wonderment depicted upon the faces of his companions, returned to the hide.

As he did so, he looked up and with a cry of "condor!" he pointed to a large open place. To strain their eyes as they would, they could see nothing but the serenest of skies. Not a cloud was in sight, much less the dark pinions of the vulture king of the Cordilleras.

Getting to his singular task again, Elgardo carried the hide into a large open place. To the fleshy side he fastened the pieces of meat with cords made from the sinews of the llama and huancu, and having concealed Nicholas and Jack at a spot from which they could see the trap and not be seen in return, by the peering eyes of the condor, the ingenious boy went back to the device, and with a smile of self-satisfaction, crept under the skin!

"Catching a condor with a cow-skin will prove as successful as catching a fly old bird with chaff," said the incredulous Jack, in low tones to his companion.

"I am not willing to confirm your judgment, Jack," was the reply.

"You'll confirm it presently and help me laugh at Elgardo's wits," he said. A few minutes later, Elgardo came back with a single-handled would be the very chap to attempt to catch a gigantic bird, and one of the shrewdest of the feathered family, with such a ludicrous device as he has fixed up."

Nicholas, the student, did not reply. He had more confidence in Elgardo's condor-trap, though he could not see how the boy would secure his prize.

In seeking food the condor depends almost entirely upon his keenness of vision. From his station in mid-air, even beyond the almost of the Cordillera hunter, he notes a carcass and at once descends. His sense of smell is very poor; a piece of raw meat wrapped in a paper and placed before him will not attract his attention.

Our impatient friends did not have to wait long for the appearance of the great bird of prey. A finger laid on Jack's arm told him that the quick eye of Nicholas had detected the condor, and a glance upward showed him the great bird descending slowly. Nearer and nearer, in concentric circles, came the condor, and at last his talons sunk into the flesh that crowned the hide. Then he fell at once to gorging himself, tearing the meat and devouring it with disgusting rapidity until Jack expressed his wonderment at Elgardo's inactivity.

"Ha! ha!" laughed the boy. "My little Peruvian is caught in his own trap. He is afraid of the bird he has called from the skies. The condor has caught the boy, not the boy the condor. There is the best shot I shall ever get at the air-king!" and the speaker seized his rifle; but the hand of his companion was laid upon it.

"No, Jack. We must not offend Elgardo. You forget that we owe him our lives. Think of the jaguar last night. My word for it that he is not lying inactive beneath the skin, for a minute since I saw a hand rise from beneath it, and it held a rope."

"A rope? I did not see it. What can the boy be doing?"

"We must wait. What! another condor? That is one more than the boy has bargained for."

Sure enough a second condor pounced upon the meat, and speedily fell to devouring it. The train did not fight for the spots, but side by side to the flesh which already beneath the warm rays of the sun was becoming putrid. To our young adventurers the sight before them was exciting, and it was with difficulty, notwithstanding his late words, that Nicholas could prevent his young friend from firing at the birds.

But a new scene was about to burst upon their vision.

The trap was about to be sprung; and all at once Elgardo shot from beneath the skin with a

loud cry, and turning toward our friends called them forth.

The eager boys did not waste time in obeying the summons, and as they leaped from the retreat, the condors attempted to escape.

But in vain!

Jack now saw that Elgardo had not remained idle during his sojourn under the skin, nor had he wished to leave it before he did.

The birds, uttering their peculiar cries, not unlike the hissing voice of the goose, continued to attempt flight; but a number of strong cords had been tied about their legs while they were gorging themselves. These cords were also fastened to the heavy and unwieldy hide, which they could not, tied as they were, carry aloft.

For many moments the trio enjoyed, to a certain degree, the struggles of the gigantic birds. "Cow-skin catch condor after all, eh?" cried Elgardo, turning a look of triumph upon Jack.

In this way the Cordillera herdsman catches many hundreds in a year. Sometimes, when he wants to kill many at once, he kills a mule and puts the carcass on the edge of a pit, so balanced that it will easily fall over. Pretty soon the sky is black with the great birds, and down they pounce upon it. Then by fighting over the meat, they draw it over the edge and it falls down into the pit. Not willing to lose it they follow it down and gorge themselves so that they cannot rise. Then come the people, and with stones and clubs they put the birds to death. So, señors, you see we have many traps for the condor. This is but one of them. Now I will show you."

So saying, Elgardo drew forth his bolas—that indispensable companion of the Indian of Peru—and took the lighter ball in his hand. Then for a moment he swung the other two in a wide circle over his head, and suddenly sent the strange weapon forward. A moment later the aim told, for the weapon encompassed the neck of one of the condors, and as it fell, it caught the great wings grew still, and the bird dropped upon the hide.

"Now, my boy," said Elgardo, turning to Jack, "you shall slay your first condor." But Jack would not shoot a captive. Can't you unloose him?"

The Peruvian boy smiled.

"We'll see, little señor," he said, and drawing his knife, he stepped toward the remaining bird.

When at a distance of twenty feet from him, Elgardo halted, and seizing the glittering blade at the point drew his right arm back.

"Ready?" he said, glancing over his shoulder.

Jack cocked his rifle and fixed his sparkling eyes on the monster of the mountains. Elgardo stood for a moment with the knife drawn back, and then sent it whizzing forward. A loud shout of applause from Nicholas attested the success of the throw. The North American Indian could not have thrown his tomahawk with greater precision. If the vol had cut the cord that prevented the condor's flight, and as it was the last bird to the feast, and consequently not so gored as its companion, it rose at once into the air.

Up, up went the condor! Jack, though covering it, did not fire.

"Quick!" cried Nicholas, sharing the excitement of the moment.

"Quick, señor, or el condor will escape."

But the young hunter did not touch the trigger until the noble bird had been given a fair chance for life. Then a loud report burst upon the ears of all, and the vulture-king fell over and began to descend.

"Hurrah!" shouted Nicholas, carried away with enthusiasm. A shot good enough to invoke a Berdian's envy.

"I hit him in the head; wait and see!" replied Jack, in calm triumph.

A moment later the condor reached the ground, and Elgardo and Nicholas were surprised to see the boy's feet being given a fair chance for life. Then a loud report burst upon the ears of all, and the vulture-king fell over and began to descend.

Not a little pleased with their adventure, the trio left the spot and continued their journey toward Albo's hut. Jack carried away several wing feathers of the bird as souvenirs of his first condor.

By Elgardo's guidance the hut was reached at the close of day; but not a living object greeted them. The absence of the pet puma was remarked by the Peruvian boy; but a surprise greater than that awaited them in the hut. Upon entering the hut, they found everything that belonged to Jack and Nicholas standing in the center of the room.

"Some one has been here!" cried Nicholas.

"Albo's!" said Elgardo. "See! he has taken only his own property. If the vol had cut the cord that prevented the condor's flight, and as it was the last bird to the feast, and consequently not so gored as its companion, it rose at once into the air.

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